

**REMARKS**

Claims 8; 12; and 15 have been amended. Claims 1 to 7; 9 to 11; 13; and 14 have been canceled.

Claims 8; 12; and 15 remain for examination. Claim 8 is the sole independent method.

Claim 8 has been amended to be an independent method claim. It is believed that the Examiner's objections and rejection (under 35 U.S.C. § 112) to claims 8; 12; and 15 have been overcome.

The Examiner did not treat the method claims on the merits in the first office action. The apparatus claims were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 based upon St. Germain et al. (US 5,534,007). Applicant points out that St. Germain does not teach or suggest a two-step release, as defined in amended method claim 8, comprising withdrawing an outer sheath followed by operation of a release mechanism. St. Germain shows a single step release: an outer sheath is withdrawn to deploy a prosthesis.

The Examiner's attention is directed to the Information Disclosure Statement that accompanies this Amendment, which also includes copies of the listed documents. Ravenscroft et al (US 5,480,423) (which is listed in the Statement) discloses a prosthesis delivery system (for delivery of a stent in a bile duct) with a two step release, but there is nothing in Ravenscroft that teaches or suggests a method for deploying an endovascular prosthesis in a blood vessel comprising advancing and withdrawing an outer sheath that is tapered between a larger distal diameter and a smaller proximal diameter, as defined in amended claim 8 (the taper allows for better blood circulation pass the catheter – see Specification Page 15, lines 8 top 18 – which is a feature that Ravenscroft does not teach, suggest, or even comprehend the need for). Furthermore, there is nothing in Ravenscroft that teaches or suggests, after deployment of a prosthesis, fastening the prosthesis to body tissue.

For these reasons, applicant believes that Claims 8; 12; and 15 are in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that questions or matters of clarification remain, applicant believes that such matters can be handled expeditiously by an interview by telephone to advance prosecution of this case, and the applicant is committed to proceed on that basis.

Respectfully Submitted,

By

Daniel D. Ryan  
Registration No. 29,243

RYAN KROMHOLZ & MANION, S.C.  
Post Office Box 26618  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53226  
(262) 783 - 1300  
Customer No.: 26308